Childhood Education

Toward Maturity: A Mid-century Challenge

We Improve COMMUNICATION

FEBRUARY 1951

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Childhood Education

For Those Concerned with Children

To Stimulate Thinking Rather Than Advocate Fixed Practice

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Next Month—

"Toward Maturity: We Solve Problems" is the theme in March. Planning editor is Joyce Cooper. A special editorial by William Kilpatrick is on "Faith for Meeting the Problems of Our Times."

"Children Have Their Problems" is treated in four articles: nursery, Frances S. Stiles; kindergarten, Eugenia Hunter; primary, Betty Atwell and Betty Warner; and intermediate, Joseph P. Lassoie.

Home and school problems faced by children are reviewed by Alice Elliott Siemons. L. D. Haskew and Agnes Snyder contribute articles dealing with helping teachers solve their problems. The conflict between ideals and practices is examined by Alice L. Goddard.

News and reviews keep you informed.

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The Wonder of It. *Courtesy, Althea Beery, Cincinnati, Ohio*

By LAVERNE STRONG

WE FIND MANY WAYS TO COMMUNICATE

aVerne Strong, planning editor for this issue CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, introduces the onth's theme—"Toward Maturity: We Im-ove Communication"—with a discussion of hat the rather formal word, "communica-on," means in our complex civilization. She lps us to see that it has a direct, everyday nd of meaning for all of us. Miss Strong curriculum consultant, State Department of ducation, Hartford, Connecticut.

N A NOT TOO FAR DISTANT PAST, THE ze of our world loomed almost terrify-gly large and threatening, and we oke not only vaguely but often in norance of the strange peoples who ved in far-off lands.

Breadth of communication among in-viduals was limited sharply by time nd space factors. Those within a per-onal, immediate environment could peak and listen to each other; but com-unication between widely separated dividuals could be accomplished only rough reading and writing. The avail-bility of materials through these ave-ues was controlled by transportation, nd, as a consequence, communication as accomplished only through long, me-consuming processes.

But increased effectiveness of com-unication was bound to come, for it one of the basic needs of the individ-al. A desire to communicate causes us reach out to others in an attempt to roject to them—and to share with them -our personal knowledge, information, eliefs, attitudes, appreciations, ideas, oughts, and emotions. A pouring-out f one's own however is insufficient. nteraction and exchange among indi-viduals brings about an added enjoy-ment, stimulation, and clarification. Es-sentially communication is an exten-sion of self, and the degree of success achieved in establishing understanding with others plays a very real part in desirable personality development and adjustment. It is a fundamental expe-rience and as such is woven inextricably with life itself.

Science Gives Us New Media

Urged on by the desire to conquer space and time and to develop closer communication with all people, man has produced inventions thick and fast. The strangers of yesterday have moved so close to us that they have become today the neighbors on our doorstep. Problems in China were once far removed and remote, but now that this part of the Orient is but thirty hours from us, our concern becomes immediate and urgent.

The broad use of and stress upon all kinds of communication media now available make it almost impossible for us to keep up with all the news, events, views, and ideas that others are intent upon sharing with us. The radio, tele-vision, telephone, cablegram put us in almost instant touch with others wherever they may be. Airplanes and "Super Chiefs" speed mail, newspapers, maga-zines, and books. Only too well do men realize the value and power of com-munication as a means of influencing the minds and beliefs of others.

It is an instrument which dictators use not only to hold their own people

in subjugation but also to gain converts in other lands. Through print and especially through the radio, their ideologies are dinned without cessation. Since they fear the results of communication with those who live in free countries, they employ bans and severe penalties to keep their people mentally walled in. They have ample reason to fear reception of ideas which may cause questioning criticism or doubt, ideas which are a definite challenge to passive acceptance of blind followership.

Since our policies and way of life have been discredited and distorted, it has become necessary for us to attempt to establish closer communication with other nations so that they may learn the truth firsthand. "The Voice of America" has been our answer to misinformation and through it we are attempting to reach the minds of people so that they may form honest, unbiased opinions. The extent of the success of this particular radio project may well be one of the deciding factors which determines whether our world exists in peace or engages in total, all-out war.

The Need Is Urgent

The whole concept of the United Nations grew from the desire of men to come together in an attempt to establish a means of communication with each other through which problems and differences could be worked out and dissolved. The difficulties experienced there—not attributable to language barriers—make urgently evident the need for men to understand each other. The work has been hampered because of distrust, fear, and suspicion.

Only through maturity of thought, speech, and action can we even begin to approach the ideal of a world in which the good of all men takes precedence over the selfish desires and greed of the few. Increased maturity in that which is given, increased maturity in that which is accepted may well be the keynote of advancement.

In its final essence, communication between nations is but the representation of communication among the individuals who make up those nations. As such it becomes a major concern in the education of all youth. Communication is no new phase or facet of learning that must be developed at the present time. Instead it has been ever-present since the days of the first schools. Readin', writin', and elocution were not only integral parts of the first studies but a major portion of time and effort were devoted to them. As our modern curriculum has broadened to include all the activities over which the school has direction and as the means of communication have so greatly increased, not only must time and effort be continued to develop it, but more effective ways found.

Our children must learn to read with more comprehension, with more discrimination, and with more critical evaluation. They must learn to listen critically, to weigh and to evaluate the ideas that they hear on all sides so that they will be able to discern truth from propaganda. They must be able to express themselves in speech clearly, vigorously, fluently, and effectively. They must be able to express their ideas in writing so that others may read their ideas and understand them. With the advent of television and movies, boys and girls must be taught to "see" or to "look" with critical evaluation of the ideas received through vision.

Are We Being Understood?

If communication was a simple process in which all the skills and abilities

uld be gained through drill and rote emorization, our problem would be nall indeed. But like all learning, it an active and dynamic process. The eaker or writer selects vocabulary and ganizes it into a language structure at he believes will best convey his mes-ge to others. But as his ideas emerge ther in print or as spoken words, how n he be sure what the mind of another ill do to them? No one can *make* or *ive* a meaning or meanings to others.

The print or spoken symbols exist as bridge from one mind to another. The ind of the recipient grasps the symbols, eacts to their stimuli, and creates for self its own meaning. The meaning at-ached to the symbols will always be in rms of the background of experience nd/or mood of the listener or reader. herefore, this achieved meaning may r may not be the meaning intended by he giver. Many have had the experience f creating a misunderstanding by has-ily penning a note or letter only to have he reader create for himself an errone-us impression far different than that which was intended.

Giant presses roll out identical books by the thousands. Two individuals may it down to read identical copies of the ame book, but during the activity, each nind must put the meaning to the black rint upon the pages. Hence, it has been said that no two people ever read exactly and precisely the same book. Everyone has been met by the puzzled, "What do you mean?" when a hearer as been unable to achieve clear mean-ng for the stimulus that has just been given him.

Meaning by Gesture and Tone

But the problem of true communica-ion goes still further than this, for it is nfluenced by the setting in which the message is conveyed. The same words may be spoken, but the mood, the tone, or the manner may produce a variety of meanings according to the emotional context. The "No!" spoken hastily and sharply in anger leaves no doubt that refusal is strongly meant; the "No?" spoken with the rising inflection of a question may mean mockery or teasing; the long, lingering "No-o-o-o" may possibly mean "Yes." A softly spoken, gentle "Come here" warm with overtones of affection invites the instant response of movement toward the speaker; the brusque, raucous "Come here!" shouted in anger impels the listener to flee in the other direction to safety.

In countless situations, no words are used but even so feelings, reactions, and emotions are communicated from one to another. How well we all understand the meaning conveyed by a warm smile, a pat, a friendly slap on the shoulder, a hug, a kiss, a squeeze of the hand, a cheery wave, a look full of affection or pride. How equally well do we understand the meaning of a shrug of a shoulder, a blank or icy stare, an insolent or disdainful look, the clenched fist, the hard slap of the hand, the downward curve or pout of the lips, the lift of an eyebrow, the supercilious manner, the rude turning of a shoulder or the flood of tears.

As teachers and parents working with children, we are daily expressing to them by gesture and by tone the intrinsic value that we place upon them. Children are intuitive enough to sense quickly the basic regard in which adults hold them. Many unpleasant and undesirable situations are created by children reacting not to spoken words but to the implication that underlies them. Recordings were made of situations in which student teachers were working with young chil-

dren. The analysis made later emphasized the need for the teacher to develop better communication with the children. But in many instances the criticism was not directed at *what* was said but rather the tone and manner in which it was given. How our guidance of children could be improved if we but only understood children as they do us.

Courtesy, Hunter College Elementary School, New York City

We learn to communicate.

Communication Through the Arts

The world has been immeasurably enriched and beauty has been brought to all of us through the communications made to us by those who are gifted in the fields of the arts. The writer of a great piece of literature, the poet who must share his emotion, the painter who captures and makes lasting a fleeting moment of beauty, the actor who takes us momentarily to share in the lives of others, the musician who moves us from happiness to sadness with the magic of his music, the dancer, the sculptor—to all of them are we deeply indebted for a depth of emotion, a vicarious experience, a release, or an increased appreciation and insight that we could never achieve alone.

The value of the arts as a form of communication is an area within the curriculum that must receive definite encouragement and further provision made for its development. As added hours of leisure time become a part of our daily living, our children have a need for inner resources that will make such time valuable to them.

Exploration in the various media of the arts may uncover talent to be encouraged and developed. But gifted or not, all can obtain release of emotion, joy in creative effort and an added appreciation of the contributions of others. It may not be great art but it is the expression of innermost thoughts, ideas, and emotions and the therapeutic values are not to be disregarded.

Evaluating What We Learn

In the area of the social studies we have long been guilty of communicating to our children erroneous impressions and attitudes toward people of other nations. Particularly is this true when they differ from us in custom, habit, or dress. The stress upon superficial differences is often accompanied by the implication that they are unacceptable. Yet basically men and the nations made up of men are alike. There is a need to stress the essential likenesses not only inherent in man but in the problems he faces. Above all, the concept is needed of man's interdependence upon man.

Too often one phase of life is stressed far out of proportion to the whole. A visitor from Holland spoke with strong emotion as she made her plea, "When will you *stop* teaching your children that we are a land of wooden shoes, tulips, and windmills? Yes, they are there and a part of us but there is more, so much more that the children should know about us." Herein lies an opportunity to build world understanding and the world friendships that are needed today.

As teachers and parents, the challenge is ever before us to improve the ability of our children to communicate. As they grow and develop, let us help them express as maturely as they can that which they have to give; let us help them to receive as maturely as possible that which others have to communicate to them. Let us neglect no avenue of communication. Let us help them to stand fearlessly, with ease and poise before a group so that they will be able to communicate the leadership that the world today must have. Let us help them to express and interpret in every media. Let us improve communication by developing openmindedness and critical discrimination. Let us help our children to weigh, to judge, and to evaluate. Let us be aware of what we ourselves tell our children in our daily associations with them—through our words, through our facial expressions, and through the tones of our voices. Let us make them aware of what they too tell others both in word and in action.

Of what value is it to work to develop ever-increasing maturity with one child or even with a group of children? The dramatic story is told of the night at the Hollwood Bowl when all the lights were suddenly turned off and complete darkness enveloped the great mass of people seated there. But at a signal, each lighted a match and held it aloft. The combined strength of the thousands of tiny lights, flickering bravely and steadily, may well point the way for us. Can we, too, light in each child the knowledge, the understandings, the will, the desire, the willingness to work toward a new world of lasting peace in which all men can communicate freely with each other?

IN TIME OF CRISIS WE MUST AVOID BOTH IGNORANT CHANGE AND ignorant opposition to change.—JOHN STUART MILL.

By HANNAH M. LINDAHL

Communication in 1950--- Mature or Immature?

If we accept our communication media without discernment, we are in danger of being overwhelmed by their very number. The effects of everything from newspapers to television upon the individual striving to attain maturity are analyzed by Hannah M. Lindahl, director of elementary education in Mishawaka, Indiana.

NEVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF THE world have there been so many media of communication for both adults and children. There are books, newspapers, and magazines to read, radio programs to listen to, and television programs and movies to see. In addition, there are lectures to attend, open forums in which to participate, and conferences making use of group dynamics.

With all these numerous channels available for communicating with others, we need to ask ourselves how effective these media are. Do they contribute to the development of mature people? Are we better listeners, more profound thinkers, and more zealous in social participation because of our present-day channels of communication?

No one would deny that the opportunities for and the physical means of communication are greatly expanding our experiences through the easy dissemination of information. The mechanics and the technological apparatus for communicating ideas have improved at a phenomenal pace. But in examining the various media of communication, we cannot help wondering whether those media are moving us toward maturity or toward a passive form of entertainment which fails to stimulate mature thought and action.

An informed public is essential to the development of a democracy. Newspapers and magazines that are not biased in their point of view concerning political, social and economic problems contribute greatly to the growth of democracy. We know, however, that news is sometimes distorted and misrepresented by those who do not hesitate to suppress items or color the news to serve selfish purposes.

Are We Using Newspapers and Magazines Effectively?

It is our responsibility to help boys and girls to understand that one of the characteristics of mature citizenship is an awareness of the need for developing independent conclusions based upon broad reading of the news. We need to show youth that the same issue may be reported in two newspapers with a different slant and that, consequently, when we read only one newspaper—and many towns in America have only one newspaper—we may not get a balanced portrayal of all sides of the problem. When training in broad newspaper and magazine reading is neglected, we send forth from our schools many young people whose ideas will become increasingly immobile and inflexible because they allow their judgments to be formed by others instead of reading, thinking, and drawing their own conclusions.

When we observe the numerous magazines of immature appeal for sale, we have reason for being skeptical about the cultural level of our country. Perhaps we should ask ourselves if we are laying the foundation for good taste by reading good magazines in our classrooms throughout both the elementary and secondary schools. If children from grade one through grade twelve are exposed to the best magazines for their age level, we may look forward to a higher degree of maturity in the adult selection of magazines.

Magazines, like newspapers, may also greatly influence public opinion. The type of articles published by a magazine will often reflect a definite point of view in relation to national and international problems. If an individual reads only those magazines which represent one point of view, he is not exercising maturity. The use of many good magazines in the classroom will not only help to develop taste in this medium of communication but will also contribute to critical reading and to the habit of forming independent opinions.

Children and youth need frequent suggestions and definite purposes for reading newspapers and magazines containing news articles. Even with such guidance, however, some of the children may take the position of the fifth-grade boy whose answer to the question, "How often do you read the newspaper?" was as follows:

"I don't read the newspaper because I read almost all day at school and I think enough is enough."

Does the Radio Reflect a Mature Society?

Without doubt, the radio is one of the most powerful media of communication today, for by way of the radio a significant message can be heard in millions of homes simultaneously. Do the adults in those millions of homes listen with a mature, thoughtful attitude, or do they gullibly accept what they hear? The answer to that question depends upon the degree to which they believe that as intelligent members of society they owe it to themselves and to their world neighbors to listen critically and to form their own judgments.

Frequently we hear an individual say, "My favorite commentator is so-and-so." Are we mature individuals if we listen to only one commentator whose conclusions are perhaps the same as ours? Perhaps the school can assume more responsibility in helping boys and girls to grow toward maturity by encouraging them to listen to different commentators and to compare their interpretations of the news. Thus will youth come to understand how a broad basis of information is indispensable in making intelligent judgments and in forming personal opinions.

Surely no one will deny that two characteristics of radio programs today are open to criticism. One characteristic is the frequent interruption of programs with advertising announcements.

The second criticism of many radio programs is their emphasis upon thrillers, murder mysteries, and soap operas. Are these programs a barometer of our cultural level? If the radio as a means of mass communication would make increased efforts to lift our cultural level through more programs that reflect good taste, the service of this means of communication in contributing to the development of maturity would be infinitely greater than it is today.

Inasmuch as some children listen to radio programs almost as many hours per week as they spend in school, teachers

should be vitally interested in lending their support to the improvement of radio programs. Some progress has been made in this direction, but there are still too many horror programs and serial thrillers which have a disturbing effect upon children's minds and emotions.

One way in which all of us can contribute to the improvement of radio programs for children is to write letters of appreciation to sponsors who use scripts that possess artistic merit or that portray worthy social attitudes and citizenship.

Other desirable programs which deserve our favorable reaction are those which open up new channels of wholesome activity for children, such as hobbies, games, music appreciation, and dramatized versions of the best in children's literature and of significant episodes in our national history. We have made but a feeble beginning in using radio effectively to develop good taste and instill an appreciation of that which possesses geniune merit. The responsibility rests not only upon sponsors and producers but educators and parents.

In order to make intelligent suggestions for the improvement of radio programs for children, teachers need to be familiar with the current programs to which children listen. As teachers and parents we should follow children's advice to "ketch up."

Is the School Adequately Using the Movie Projector?

On Saturday afternoons millions of American children are sitting in movie houses, looking at serials, animated cartoons, and feature pictures. Most of the pictures are intended for adults rather than for children. Some of the pictures, however, are excellent musical plays, dramatizations of books for children, and films with historical settings. From these pictures, good and bad, ideas are being communicated to the children. Through the teacher's recommendations of desirable movies, the children may be influenced to select those movies which inculcate desirable attitudes.

Numerous educational films are being produced for school use. As teaching aids, these films, with their vivid, graphic presentation of information, enrich the experiences of children and contribute to the development of a broader understanding of the world.

Is Television a Purveyor of Culture?

Television, although in its infancy, has already made rapid progress in captivating both youthful and adult audiences. This latest medium of communication has made some effort to interest children with nonsense programs, nursery stories and songs, puppet plays, circus activities, sports, and news. Howdy Doody and Hopalong Cassidy regularly weave a spell over youthful audiences.

Some children have reported that they spend about four hours each day viewing television. In addition to the programs designed for children, they are looking at programs meant for adults, such as western thrillers and gangster pictures, sophisticated comedy, and plays delineating adult problems. Unless the home exercises control over the time when children view television, this medium of communication may become as disturbing to health and emotions as the commercial movie has often been.

Today, while television is still in its infancy, is the opportune moment for parents and educators to urge that producers make television not only a means of entertainment but also a medium for purveying culture. The finest in music, in literary excellence, in drama, and in

the presentation of history, both past and present, should be the contribution which television makes to our cultural growth. Only thus will this medium realize its potentialities for raising the level of our maturity.

What Do Comic Books Indicate About Our Maturity?

When we read the statement that comic books have a circulation of at least 50,000,000 copies each month, and when we realize that some adults as well as children are enthusiastic readers of comic books, we wonder about the effect of this medium of communication upon the development of maturity. Surely no one would contend that the substitution of poor reading material and crude pictures for reading matter of literary value and illustrations of artistic merit will stimulate intellectual development or instill aesthetic and ethical values. Even though some of the comic books are much better than others, their contribution to the development of maturity is indeed questionable.

Children and youth who are spending much time with comic books are denying themselves the inspiration of good literature. In adulthood, satisfaction with comic books as a steady diet of reading certainly indicates a state of infantilism.

Do Pictorialized Magazines Contribute to Maturity?

We know that there are individuals whose reading ability will never rise to the level of the reading material in newspapers and adult magazines. For those individuals the pictorialized magazine renders a genuine service, for they can respond to a pictorial stimulus whereas they are unable to react with satisfaction to verbal symbols on the printed page.

The pictorialized magazine also renders service to the individual whose busy schedule may at times curtail his time for reading about significant events in the news.

If, however, the pictorialized magazine becomes a substitute for the printed page, it will be a real threat to the development of maturity. Dependence upon the pictorialized magazine develops lazy mental processes, a superficial knowledge of the news, and a decreasing ability to read, to interpret, and to form individual judgments based upon thinking.

Why Should We Encourage Open Forums and Group Dynamics?

Fortunately, open forums and group dynamics have caught the imagination of the American people. We covet the privilege of reacting to ideas about our political, social, and economic welfare, as expressed by leaders of forums and of group discussions. We listen more attentively when we know that we have a chance to voice our opinions and to express our ideas.

There is much hope for a nation and for a world in which people have many opportunities to challenge the thinking of one another and to evaluate the ideas of individuals and of groups. Using these media of communication—the open forum and group dynamics—will lead to greater and greater maturity, for the open mind is a growing mind.

More extensive use of the forum and of group dynamics in the schools of America will help to build a foundation for participation in these media of communication in adult life. As individuals grow in the ability to listen, to evaluate, and to react to the thoughts of others, the horizons of understanding will inevitably widen. Beyond those widened horizons may lie the answers to problems which assail our troubled world.

By GEORGE MURPHY

CONVERSATION—A LOST ART?

George Murphy, associate professor of education at Pennsylvania State College, says "No" to the controversial question posed in the title to this article. Perhaps conversation could become a lost art—could be crowded out of our lives by the sheer quantity of communication media which surround us—but not, writes the author, if you have fun doing your job, "the kind of fun that comes when Annie slips her hand in yours and shyly says, 'I like you, Miss Abrams.'"

THE FATHER WAS CONVINCED HE SHOULD spend more time with his children—take them places—play with them—talk with them—show them love—take an interest in what they did.

So he took his three to the movies. On the way, he remembered about playing with the children, so he asked (he remembered guessing games), "What movie are we going to see?"

"Hoppie?" hopefully from Timmy.

"Bugs Bunny?" hopefully from Jim.

"'Liz'beth Taylor?" hopefully from Mary.

"Nope," and the tones were oozing daddy-knows-best. "'Rembrandt'! He was a famous artist. Lived long, long ago. You kids should know about him. Charles Laughton's the star. He's a wonderful British actor—one of the best in Hollywood. You should know about him, too. Then when you grow up, you will know all about a famous artist AND a famous actor."

The trip home was an examination. If the children knew the answers, daddy beamed and said, "That's right." If the children didn't know the answers, daddy frowned and said, "What were you doing in there, sleeping? I paid fifteen cents to get you in—and you sleep! How do you ever expect to grow up and amount to anything? Why didn't you pay attention and learn something? How did I ever get such dumb kids?"

Daddy had pleasant dreams. He was a REAL father, a companion, a friend to his children.

Discussions for Teacher

The speaker was right. The teacher was convinced that she should teach listening. She *was* depending too much on reading as *the* means of learning. But what to do? Umm. Why, phonograph records, of course! But which ones?

The school's collection offered Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, symphonies, concertos, marches—and SHAKESPEARE—"Hamlet—Four Excerpts." Sixth-graders *should* know about Shakespeare. Just the thing.

And the class could have group discussion. Let's see. Mary would be good to report on Shakespeare—her father was a professor up there in college. And there could be a report on Hamlet. Maybe Hilda could do that—her folks were *some* sort of Scandinavians. And somebody could report on Maurice Evans, someone else on that theatre at Stratford, and somebody on Shakespeare's other plays. Everyone could memorize his favorite excerpt. Why, this work could go for weeks! And the children would be better prepared for high school, too. Wouldn't Miss Barnacle be pleased to have pupils who knew about Shakespeare

and Hamlet and Maurice Evans *before* they came to her English classes?

Maybe there was something in this modern idea of having group discussion—teaching children to listen.

Teacher had pleasant dreams. She was a *real* teacher—an inspiration—a guide for her children.

Make the Most of Progress

Most parents and teachers *want* to do the right things for children. Adults generally like children and want to help children become adults. But adults generally do unto children as adults have done unto children. Young parents do "what mother and father did." Young teachers do "what teacher did."

In mother's day, there were movies and radio, and grandma KNEW the world and its children were going to the dogs. She discouraged going to movies and wasting time at the radio. She played up homework and jobs around the house.

She didn't get far. The children went to the movies, listened to the radio, avoided homework, got out of jobs around the house—and grew up to be adults who had children.

In *this* day, there are movies, radio, and television, and mother *knows* the world and its children are going to the dogs. Mother discourages going to movies and wasting time with "those awful television shows." She plays up homework and jobs around the house.

She doesn't get far. The children, bless them, go to the movies, listen and look at television, avoid homework, and get out of jobs around the house. And these children will become adults and try to do unto their children as they had been done unto.

We can throw up our hands and say, "There's nothing we can do. People are people in any generation. Some are adults—some, children. All we can do is let Nature take its course." Or we can be excited about such elements of present-day culture as television and use it as a positive factor in rearing children so that both they and we are happy.

Try Democracy at Home

The Browns have four children: ages six, nine, twelve, thirteen. Everybody likes the Browns. They gear their home-life into modern living. John Brown's a lawyer—commutes into the city—sees his wife at breakfast—his family at dinner, evenings and on weekends and holidays. Everyone likes to see how the Browns do things.

They don't do things as their parents did them. The Browns do things together democratically.

Usually once a week (sometimes more) there is a dinner and/or an evening "business meeting." At the meeting, the family discusses budget, work, recreation, and any aspect of family life important enough to be brought up by any member. Children and parents state gripes, make suggestions, plan, evaluate.

You would have enjoyed hearing thirteen-year-old Martin, who was responsible for mowing the lawn, trying to convince the family that nine-year-old Henry was old enough "to take his turn." The family decision was that Martin was to teach Henry and report on the result at the next meeting. Martin reported that the mower was "too much for Henry yet—he'd need to grow some more."

The Browns often have dinner from trays around the television set. Their conversation centers on personal reactions—evaluations. They discuss the soundness of the ideas, what they learned from the show, whether the

show was good or bad propaganda. They vote on favorite shows and give reasons for their choice. And the family listens seriously to six-year-old Margaret, just as Margaret listens to the family.

The Browns respect each other. The adults accept the children as children, and as adults try to understand each child's point of view. The children accept their parents as adults and try to understand them. Said twelve-year-old Jeanette to her thirteen-year-old brother once when he had not been considerate, "You shouldn't say such things to daddy, Martin. You know he's old and can't live much longer. We should all be as kind as we can while he's alive." The story is one of John Brown's favorites.

The children know on what nights they may invite friends in, and they have friends in often. The adult Browns know the junior Browns need to learn from their peers—to have fun with them. The junior Browns cooperate when the adult Browns wish to entertain *their* peers.

"How do you do it?" people ask.

"It's easy," the Browns answer. "We love kids and we treat them as people. We think democracy can work in the home. We don't worry about our children. We relax, and have fun with them."

Conversation in the Classroom

Miss Montelli has thirty-one pupils in her room. She gears her program into modern living. Her day starts with greetings to the people (including children) she meets on the way to school.

She knows how much children learn from their peers in the minutes they talk and play together in the morning. She skillfully leads the whole group into sharing that learning.

In this morning period, children report on what they saw at the movies, or heard on the radio, or read, or saw on the television set. The group listens, asks questions, makes comments. The day starts with a pleasant sharing, mutual help, democratic learning.

From the sharing and planning period where emphasis has been on a two-way communication involving speaking and listening, comes the work period with emphasis on "doing" to meet needs, to solve problems, to awaken and to deepen interests, to express ideas and feelings, to develop and exercise muscles and to build skills.

Everyone likes Jane Montelli. She doesn't do unto her pupils as she had been done unto. And she doesn't do unto the children's parents as her teacher had done unto them.

She says parents and pupils are people—as good and as bad as people always are. She accepts all of them—just as they are—as her friends. The child with the runny nose or the child with the nits in the hair is just as wonderful to her as the child who looks like a lily or the child who smells like a rose. The parents who gripe are as much her friends as those who don't. She understands why they gripe and bears no resentment—feels a bit sorry.

There are so many things to talk about in the learnings she stimulates, that no one would ever think conversation had become a lost art in the classroom, anymore than one would think conversation had become a lost art in the Brown home.

She knows children learn to talk by talking. She knows that children will talk when they are secure, when they are free to express that in which they are interested. She knows their basic needs must be met—children *must* have security, affection, recognition, success, freedom. She shares her wealth of in-

terests and enthusiasms. She encourages children to listen for fun and for learning, to listen for similarities and for differences, to listen to harmonies and disharmonies, to listen to propaganda and to evaluate it. No super teacher, Miss Montelli—she makes mistakes—she tires—she even gets discouraged. But basically she loves kids, and she likes to teach them. No rare bird, Miss Montelli—we have thousands like her—praises be!

Listening Is Communication, Too

Conversation a lost art? No! Let's not consider such a hypothesis. In our culture there is still time and opportunity to communicate—else life would be pretty dull.

Media have changed. We have much more of mass communication (a form of conversation). We can see and hear people who are molding One World. We can hear people talk Chinese, Russian, French, Spanish—we can see those people—we can listen to them—people from nations all over the world. Without understanding the symbols they use in their communication, we can learn to hear and to see what they are talking about through observing their gestures and emotional tones. What a day when we can watch for success (or failure) in the realization of Wendell Willkie's One World!

Movies, radio, television speak to us. We can teach pupils to listen actively and to listen critically. We can teach them the art of listening for enjoyment and for learning. We can teach them the art of listening actively and critically. We encourage this art of listening—even when we have no movies, no radio, no television. That morning sharing—or any time sharing—that interest you have in guiding children to be better listeners—that does the trick.

The Fun of a Job Well Done

What do we do?

Relax. Instead of dragging home papers and workbooks to correct, let's drag ourselves home to flop into comfortable chairs to watch Caesar and Coca, Hoppie—the "characters" the children enjoy—or to listen to Fibber or Jack Benny. And don't worry about Miss Barnacle's snooty evaluations of people who enjoy Imogene Coca. Your life is richer if you enjoy Shakespeare *and* Coca. *You* can feel sorrry for *her*.

Study your children. Listen to them. Look at them. They will tell you what they need—how they feel—what they think—*if* you will listen.

Be friends with parents, children, and our culture. Instead of fighting them, try to understand them and use them in the learning that goes on in your room.

In short, HAVE FUN—the kind of fun that comes from doing a job you like as well as you can do it—the kind of fun that comes from liking people and life—the kind of fun that comes from a balance of rest, work, and recreation in a full life—the kind of fun that comes when Annie slips her hand in yours and shyly says, "I like you, Miss Abrams."

THE TRUE TEST OF CIVILIZATION IS NOT THE CENSUS NOR THE SIZE of the cities, nor the crops—no, but the kind of man the country turns out.—EMERSON.

By DUANE C. SPRIESTERSBACH and McKENZIE W. BUCK

SPEECH---*An Index of Maturity*

The evolution of our first meaningless sounds into intelligible speech and the relationship of this development to maturity are discussed by Duane C. Spriestersbach, assistant professor of speech pathology, Speech Clinic, University of Iowa, and McKenzie W. Buck, instructor of speech pathology and audiology and clinical supervisor of organic disorders of speech and voice and articulation disorders at the University of Iowa, Iowa City.

OUR SPEECH AND THE VERBAL FORMS WE give to it, in our attempts to order our environments, are unique and intimately personal to each of us. Speech is one of our most effective means of self-expression. It would seem obvious, then, that the evaluation of speech behavior may be one of the means available for determining an individual's level of growth and, in some respects, his degree of emotional maturity.

Our speech behavior is determined in part by the experiences we have had in learning to express ourselves. In one sense, those of us who have normal speech have been fortunate. Given certain environmental circumstances we, too, might have stuttered, refused to talk, or lisped. We also might have been born with a cleft-lip or palate, developed defective hearing, or grown up to have crooked teeth, all of which might account for individual differences in our speech.

In view of the fact that an individual's speech behavior may be the result of forces over which he has had little or no control, the description of his speech behavior at a particular point in time serves little purpose other than to fix his level of growth. By itself, the description contributes little to the diagnosis. It does not provide adequate cues as to how the individual came to be this way or what his potentialities are. Since physical anomalies, socio-economic status of the parents, the presence of siblings, the emotional adjustment of the parents, and related situations, may have been factors contributing to his present condition, a diagnosis or evaluation can be made only after the impact of the individual's total environment has been studied and evaluated.

This discussion will deal with certain indices of speech behavior which may describe an individual's level of growth. But it is the writers' opinion that the use of such measures *by themselves* to evaluate an individual's adjustive ability is indefensible. The aspects of speech behavior to be discussed are: speech sound development, speech fluency, language development, and voice.

How Speech Sounds Grow

Speech is learned behavior. None of us was born with the ability to combine sounds into units of socially codified meaning. The sounds we used during the first few weeks of life were simply the by-products of our swallowing, sucking, belching, facial grimaces, and crying.

Over the months we learned to make more and more speech sounds. Slowly, yet definitely, we began to associate specific sounds with specific objects, forms, and feelings. By the time we were three years old, we were probably producing more than half of the sounds in the English language, even though we may not have been using them consistently in our speech. In any event,

on the basis of the information which we now have, any of us who mastered the production of all the speech sounds of English before we were eight could be considered normal.

Some of the speech sounds, for exemple, *p*, *b*, and *m*, characteristically appear in the speech of children before other sounds do. Such sounds as the *th's* (*th*at, *th*in), *s*, *r*, and *l*, show up later in a child's speech development. Speech containing substitutions such as *th* for *s*, *w* for *r*, or speech that omits these difficult sounds is commonly called "baby talk."

The typically late development of certain sounds can, for the most part, be explained logically. They may be sounds which demand a precise positioning of the articulators and thus require a lot of experimentation by the child before he hits on the right combination of movements, pressures, and positions. They may be sounds, like *k*, which have few visual cues. They may be sounds like voiceless *th*, which are not acoustically prominent, distinctive sounds in our speech. As a consequence, the child, learning as he does to speak primarily on the basis of what he hears and sees as speech, may frequently be confused as to the identity of such sounds.

Several factors may account for the persistence of "baby talk" beyond the sixth or seventh year. On the one hand, the child's social environment may have provided little speech stimulation and few, if any, good speech models to go by. In such instances, the child may have done as well as possible with the limited speech experiences that were available. Such a child is immature to the extent that he has not developed speech skills comparable to children of his own age. It must always be remembered that the retardation is to be accounted for largely in terms of the inadequacies of his environment rather than in terms of the physical, emotional, and social inadequacies of the child.

On the other hand, the "baby talk" may be a form of aggression whereby the child seeks to obtain his wants and perhaps to punish those who have stood in his way. Perhaps there is a younger brother or sister in the household who is competing with him for attention and affection. Regression in speech behavior may be one of the ways of obtaining more attention and a greater sense of security.

From the child's point of view, he is not going to the trouble of learning to talk acceptably unless he can see that it is to his advantage to do so. He won't have the motivation to change unless the new behavior makes for situations which offer more of a sense of security than does his present environment. Again, the mere description of his current behavior can have no meaning unless it is studied in the light of his past experiences and present environment.

Acquiring Ease in Speaking

Not only does the child of three or four frequently have defective articulation, by adult standards, but he also evidences many hesitations, prolongations, and other disturbances of rhythm. Van Riper[1] lists the following obstacles to fluency at this age: (1) lack of vocabulary, (2) complexity of grammer structure, (3) choosing the correct word order, (4) searching for the correct word, (5) interrupting influences in the child's environment, (6) fear of unpleasant consequences of speech and (7) speech exhibitionism.

When we appreciate the many de-

[1] Van Riper, C. **Teaching Your Child to Talk.** New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950. Chapter X.

mands which are placed on the child of this age it is little wonder that Davis[2] found that the average child of two-to-six years repeats a sound, a word, or a phrase forty-five times per thousand spoken words in spontaneous free-play speech. She also observed that the types of repetition rank as follows: phrase, word, syllable. She observed no clear-cut sex differences except for measures concerning syllable repetition. Here she found more repetition for boys than girls. Johnson[3] sums up the matter by saying that "a very considerable amount of non-fluency is characteristic of normal speech at all age levels."

We may conclude that as the youngster approaches school age he has established a level of fluency that may not undergo any marked change during the remainder of his school years. He has had practice and play with speech sound production, acquired a large enough vocabulary, and developed his language usage sufficently to give himself little reason for non-fluencies which are severe enough to be noticed by others.

It is very important to know that normal children, and adults too, repeat considerably and are in other ways non-fluent in speaking. Calling attention to non-fluencies may be disastrous. Johnson indicates that pressure on the child regarding his fluency may actually *create a stuttering problem.* In view of the fact that, in our culture, parents and others frequently have standards of fluency which are too high, it is probably wise that measures of fluency be used with a great deal of caution as indices of maturity.

[2] Davis, Dorothy M. "The Relation of Repetition in the Speech of Young Children to Certain Measures of Language Maturity and Situational Factors." **Journal of Speech Disorders,** 4:303-318 (1939); 5:235-241, 242, 246 (1940).

[3] Johnson, W., et. al. **Speech Handicapped School Children.** New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948. Chapter V.

Toward Language Maturity

Words can be manipulated in unique and characteristic fashions. There are different modes for different age levels. The child of three years typically frames a large proportion of his verbalizations in the form of questions. Later comes the chattering, then the teasing, and still later the "pig-latin." That children pass through these stages to a more stable or conventional adult type of expression is certainly a sign of maturity. However, detailed norms are not available for such behavior and the range of individual differences is great.

Language development is influenced by the occupational levels of the parents. As McCarthy[4] indicates, those children in the upper groups show a much higher proportion of adapted information and of questions, elaborated sentence structure, and greater average length of responses. Actually, then, before one can scale a child's language development as an indication of his maturity, it is essential to account for the immediate environment.

If we think of language as a symbol system which we can use to manipulate the behavior of others and which others, in turn, use to control us, we can appreciate the fact that our sensitivity to the structure and purposes of language may also be an index of maturity. As pointed out by one of the authors[5] in reference to adult speech:

> The maladjusted person is usually totally unaware of the symbolic nature of language. He does not appreciate the fact that words are abstractions of the "real thing"—objects, experiences, feelings. . . . Nor does he realize that when we talk about an object or an

[4] McCarthy, Dorothea. **The Language Development of the Pre-School Child.** Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1930.

[5] Spriestersbach, D. C. "The Role of General Semantics in Counseling." **Education,** April 1950, 70:515-518.

experience or a feeling we leave out some of the details thus making it impossible for us to tell "all" about the object, experience or feeling. Further, he usually does not recognize that there are many different levels of abstraction; he may either include such a myriad of details that he is unable to observe any relationships between the various facts, or he may talk almost entirely in generalizations, excluding the relevant details. In the latter case he will be prone to rely on theories, beliefs, customs rather than to resort to relevant experiences and observations of his own. In such instances there is a good possibility that the verbal maps which he is using have little resemblance to any existing "real" territory.

The maladjusted person is frequently unaware of the fact that the statements he makes are likely to tell more about himself than the phenomenon which he is describing. He seldom uses such words as "it appears," "it seems," "from my point of view," "as I see it." Rather, he actually thinks he is talking about the weather when he observes that it is a fine morning, instead of reflecting the state of his digestion or the good showing he has just made on an examination.

Such naive language behavior is quite evident in the young child. Indeed, most of us have a great deal to learn about our symbolic processes; few of us can claim to be extremely mature so far as insight into our own language functions is concerned.

In general, the immature person does not use his language in problem-solving fashion. His remarks tend to cloud issues, and magnify difficulties.

As Voices Change

Most people are aware that adolescent boys go through a period when control of their voices is difficult Most boys experience "voice change" between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. Their new pitch level is approximately one octave below their childish pitch level. Until the new pitch level has been established there is considerable jumping from the old level to the new and vice versa, as much to the surprise of the speaker as to his listeners. Since the pitch change comes about largely as the result of physiological and structural changes of the larynx (voice box), it should not be surprising that the change is correlated more closely with bodily development than with chronological or mental age. Since girls do not experience such an abrupt change in the size of the larynx, they do not undergo these dramatic changes in pitch level.

It is possible that in cases where there is lack of the normal amount of pitch change at adolscence there may be some degree of emotional immaturity. It is also possible that an endocrine condition may exist which may retard the change. Because of the wide individual differences and the existence of the possibility of organic etiology, mere description of voice change by itself has little meaning.

There is a common belief that vocal characteristics reveal personality traits. It has been stated that the shy, withdrawn person may have a soft, inexpressive voice while the aggressive, dominant person has a harsh, high-pitched voice. It is certainly true that some relationships do exist between personality characteristics and vocal characteristics. But the more acceptable research which has been done to date on this subject would seem to indicate that the relationships are far from being reliable and valid. It has been amply demonstrated that listeners have stereotypes in this regard; that is, a given type of vocal characteristic is commonly associated with a given type of personality by the listener. It has also been demonstrated that estimates of personality structure based on vocal characteristics alone are no more accurate than an estimate of intelligence based on judgments of facial expression.

COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE ARTS

To give us a picture of how the arts share in communication, we look particularly to the contributions of visual arts, music, and dramatization. The importance of the visual arts as a means of self-expression is related by I. L. deFrancesco, director of art education at State Teachers College, Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Catherine Warren, supervisor of music in the Public Schools of Nashville, Tennessee, tells us that "music is a part of living and no one can avoid using it as a means of expression of communication. . . ." Her discussion is enlivened with examples from classroom experiences in the Nashville Public Schools. The sheer joy of dramatic play and the opportunity for expression which it provides make this activity a delightful form of communication. It is discussed here by Franklin R. Lindquist, director, Reading Laboratory and Clinic, Teachers College of Connecticut, New Britain, Connecticut.

. . . The Visual Arts

By I. L. DEFRANCESCO

THE VISUAL ARTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN means of communication.

In a sense, they differ from prose and poetry, as composed by children, only in the nature of the media and in the symbols which they use. The "feeling" of a rainy day or of a sunset, or the "feeling" of having a new pet or of having seen an accident, or other similar experiences, may be as intense in one child as in another. Those who are facile with words may write about them while others may relate the same events with paint, crayon, or some other plastic medium. Generally, all children like to listen to stories, as well as to tell them, although it should not be inferred here that storytelling is the sole end of communication, even though it is the commonest.

The history of mankind, particularly its early stages and to a vast degree the age of the Great Empires, is largely written from the visual mementos of man's struggle with, and his conquest of, his environment. The very genesis of drawing, painting, or sculpture, as well as of the crafts, has made them instruments for recording or otherwise transmitting ideas, facts, and feelings, whatever other purposes they may have served.

The caveman of Altamira, of southern France, or of Mexico, drew, painted, and carved to give expression to his emotions and to establish a record of his exploits. Oftener than not, it was to affirm his conquest of the elements of nature. By thus giving visual form to his thoughts he gained inward satisfaction by identifying himself with the event whether it was the hunt or the fight.

Release Through Art

In the case of human beings, it is not uncommon to find a child who while ap parently inferior along certain lines of activity will show "talent" in art. It is in these instances that he, feeling the lack of equality with others, may find

Courtesy, St. Louis Public Schools

emotional release through art activity. This becomes his means of asserting himself, of identifying himself with his work and with his group. His expression then may communicate his feeling as an artist and his realization of his group standing. He may be inferior in physical development, or may not be "ready" for language work, but he is ready with a language of his own and will use it to express through color, line, and form the thing uppermost in his whole being in order to establish and satisfy his ego. Thus, he achieves emotional balance.

Of all the phases which comprise human development, the urge to express feelings and to convey thoughts seems uppermost. When a child scribbles in rhythmic, continuous, orderly fashion, he manifests the orderly rhythm and the inward pleasure that he experiences because of some achievement. This achievement may be purely physical, such as his success at coordinating his fingers or his body; or it may be another type of satisfaction that gives rise to his buoyancy. On the other hand, he may scribble in incoherent, staccato rhythms, in violent and sharp changes from flowing line to peaked shape. This last is the graphic expression of an emotional conflict, of uncoordinated mental and physical action.

As a child grows into the schematic stage, his *schema* or design continues to take on the forms suggested by his mental, emotional, and physical state of mind; therefore, he will paint or draw or carve or shape things that exhibit the way he feels. When children grow into the realistic stage, the same intensity of expression can be noted, except that the symbols have changed from mere scribbles or *schema* to a realistic and more comprehensible form.

It cannot be expected that children will make things clear to the spectator; however, quite often their art work is

a clear projection of the intensity with which they react to what has gone on before. At times, they may produce a work of art which is revealing to the adult, if the adult is conversant with the situation.

Physical, emotional, and aesthetic growth can be traced separately in the case of any child. These developmental phases are often closely related and are reasonably parallel in most normal beings. In the visual arts, as well as in reading, there is a period of "readiness." A child may have an instinctively superior feeling for color, or he may have an innate sensitiveness to texture or to form, but he may lack the "readiness" to coordinate these elements of expression into a coherent picture. Hence, grade levels and levels of growth cannot always be expected to match; the important factor here might be to discover a compensatory element.

Experience—the True Essential

A reasonable question to ask at this point may seem to be what the source of communication is. The very heart and soul of communication implies much more than merely providing children with opportunities to paint or to model. Experience, personal and immediate in character, is the true essential. It becomes the stimulus and motivating force that gives rise to expression. More particularly, we refer to children's experiences: their play, their work, the things they do, their problems, their playmates, their families, and other activities in which children normally engage. It is from these intense and vivid contacts, as well as from those that may arise from the imagination, that the finest art work of children comes. It is then, and then alone, that a child will reveal his innermost in joy, sorrow, sympathy, excitement, or calm.

The studies made by Margaret Naumburg,[1] while dealing with schizophrenic children, point out that the mental mechanisms employed by her subjects are merely pathological extensions of comparable mechanisms employed by all people in their ceaseless struggle to adapt and to adjust to modern life. Naumburg's studies prove quite conclusively, amongst other things, that experiences are the true sources of the work in visual arts produced as means of telling with paint and color and clay or other materials the things that stir deeply within the individual.

A final question is this: "Does a child interpret what he paints or carves?" "Does he tell?" Sometimes he does; oftener he does not. It is for the teacher to get a sympathetic feeling for the child's work, to analyze it, and, on the basis of other data, come to a closer understanding of the individual through his art.

[1] **Schizophrenic Art: Its Meaning in Psychotherapy.** New York: Grune and Stratton, Inc., 1950.

. . . Music

By CATHERINE WARREN

MUSIC IS TRULY THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE; an essential source of fruitful living and learning. Far from being a burden to the teaching day, music provides experiences for the child that are not only satisfying but allow him to express and thereby further develop his personality.

Children are innately musical; they are as ready to sing, to dance, as they are to laugh, run, and play. Music is a part of living and no one can avoid using it as a means of expression of communication, of interpretation, of themselves and the world in which they live.

To Open New Paths

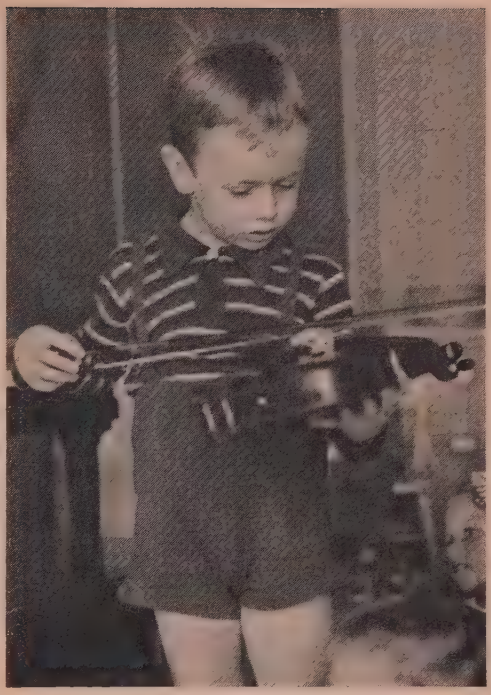
Music may help children understand each other even though there is a language barrier.

Antenor came from Brazil and entered first grade when he could speak less than a dozen words of English. He kept apart from the group, timid, shy and crying. The children began to march around the room as high-stepping horses. He smiled for the first time and when asked to carry the flag threw back his shoulders and joined the group. Through music Antenor was made a part of the group, thus bridging the gap until the language handicap could be overcome.

Many children enter school with speech difficulties which greatly hamper their communication. Some speech difficulties such as stuttering and stammering are caused by emotional problems and can be improved through participation in singing activities.

Peggy stuttered. It was much less embarrassing for her to write a note than try to speak. The teacher discovered that she could sing in a clear true voice without hesitation. Peggy was encouraged to communicate by singing until she could control the speech difficulty.

Children with eye difficulties and children who are slow-learners must depend largely upon the ear for their learning experiences to develop skill in communication. Phonograph records using good speaking and singing voices may be used as models in improving faulty speech habits or in teaching good tone quality.



Courtesy, Margaret Hampel, Stillwater, Oklahoma

Johnny built most of his memory images by audition. He was quick to remember information given orally. He could recognize melodies quickly and could distinguish tone quality of all instruments. Recordings were indispensable in his learning process.

Children mature through music as they are given a better understanding and appreciation of famous composers and national characteristics of various countries as expressed in folk music. Many times an interest may be created in geography or history through the music period.

Bennie, Ann, and several others were not too interested in geography. Difficulty in oral reading and comprehension made it a little dull for them. An examination of their songbooks showed them words and music could make geography sing. Their interest in the bright illustrations, clever words, and catchy tune of the "Whale Song" helped make an early industry of New England alive to

them. The even more illustrative words and tuneful melody of the "Erie Canal" presented to them in an enjoyable way that picturesque phase of our country's development.

Toward Personality Growth

The first step toward maturity is developing self-control. Since music's greatest appeal is emotional, music in the elementary school curriculum is of the greatest importance to children who are emotionally unstable. Through free expression in music, each child's behavior is changed, better to blend with group-accepted standards.

Franklin would come to school in an unpleasant mood, frowning and muttering to himself, slamming books, and being generally disagreeable. Soon he would burst forth with, "Ain't we going to sing today?" He would enter lustily into the group singing and seemed to become calmer.

Creative music provides development of the individual personality by furnishing experiences for the communication of feelings and ideas.

Expressive experiences afford an opportunity to release and redirect developing personality patterns. The child tends to absorb emotionally the patterns of behavior of those around him.

Music provides a socially accepted channel of self-expression.

The fourth-grade class had just given an assembly program in which the Indians sang and danced. The first grade returned to its room as a group of Indians singing and dancing. The teacher quickly changed the group from a bunch of noisy Indians to a group of first-graders who enjoyed singing real songs about Indians. Thus music helped these small children express their feelings and at the same time be socially acceptable.

Many children entering school have not achieved the successful integration of motor coordination and visual maturity. Spontaneous group activities in response to different types of music provide a means of improving muscular coordination, thus increasing the ability of handicapped children to communicate.

Clifton had a coordination problem and had difficulty in playing games and keeping up with the other children. During the music period children were asked to act out what they heard in music. Clifton could describe the music better than the other children and soon wanted to try acting it out. Gradually this rhythmic movement helped to correct his difficulty.

How the Teacher Fits In

Ability to communicate can be improved through creative participation in music under certain conditions. The classroom atmosphere must be stimulating. It must be free from tension and strain. Children must have time when they feel free to express and interpret their feelings and thoughts without direction from the teacher. Children must be made familiar with all kinds of music within their comprehension. They must be taught many songs which will help them to express different moods.

Every music experience must be so easy that practically all children can succeed. This will communicate achievement and satisfaction which is basic in democratic living.

Materials such as radio, phonographs, records, books, pictures, and instruments which suggest activities to children must be available at all times. Music activities must not be confined to one or two periods a week; they must be an integrated method of classroom living.

The classroom teacher must forget her lack of musical knowledge and remember that the best creative communication is carried out when materials are made available to children without rigid teacher direction. The teacher must discover the musical interests of her children and

provide for communication through these interests.

Teachers and children must live together in an environment where music will grow as they grow through experiences which foster understanding.

As children learn to express themselves through music, they will learn to understand; as they learn to understand they will mature.

. . . Dramatization

By FRANKLIN R. LINDQUIST

SIMPLE ELEMENTS OF DRAMATIC PLAY, which is "self-expression for its own sake,"[1] appear during infancy in the form of imitation and pantomime.

With the onset of language activity, the child is able to react in a more complex manner as he avidly explores and experiments with people, things, and ideas. He is creative: he has the audacity to invent words and laugh when the result pleases him. Much of his learning up to his entrance into school has been occasioned by his urge to play.

Too often his zest, his magnificent ebullience, his wonder, and curiosity have been dampened by a sterile, tired school program. Because play is so natural for the child, dramatic-play periods are a means of helping the child make the transition from home to school life a wholesome experience. Informal dramatic activity for teaching, objectifies principles of mathematics, social graces, safety, and other learnings.

"Let's Play House"

Dramatic play is based on the child's understanding of the experiences he has had with the people and things about him: a box can be for him a train, a pile of sand a mountain, a stick a horse, a rope his father's stethoscope. He plays horse or rabbit, and he is a horse or rabbit; soon he can normally separate fact from phantasy. Equipped as he is with the ability to improvise and create, there is little place for formal dramatics based on the use of published children's plays that are often so unrelated to either the child's language or experience. The artificiality of formal dramatics for children has discouraged pupil and teacher from using dramatics in any other form.

The use of creative dramatics, however, is another matter. As Ward[2] defines the term, it "is a general term which includes all types of informal drama improvised by the players." A family picnic, playing house or school, or dramatizing a story that the children have heard or read are some of its forms. With the teacher's guidance, children select the idea or story, elect those who are to play the parts, plan the action, improvise the dialogue during the playing, then evaluate and discuss the performance. Different casts may play the same story and the dialogue varies for each performance. The audience consists of those not playing.

Such an activity helps to promote language development. Some consideration is given to the various needs of the child as a functioning total organism—physically, intellectually, emotion-

[1] Leonard, Edith M., Miles, Lillian E., and Van der Kar, Catherine S. **The Child at Home and School.** New York: American Book Company, 1942. (P. 242).

[2] Ward, Winifred. "Creative Dramatics," in **The Role of Speech in the Elementary School.** Washington, D. C.: Dept. of Elementary School Principals, National Education Association, 1946-47, P. 75.

ally, and socially—as well as to his needs to engage in an integrated program of communication that involves reading, speaking, listening, writing.

Tensions Begin to Disappear

Childhood is a motor period of life. Creative dramatics supply an exercise of body with an opportunity to be guided in the improvement of posture, coordination, and grace. The alternation of rest and activity needed for the release of tensions is also cared for.

Wholesome emotional growth is related to body health and tone. Play is an anodyne to maladjustments and behavior problems. Dramatics may serve to reveal problems of adjustment and tend to alleviate them as well. During the election of the casts to play "Three Billy Goats Gruff," the shy child or the one rejected will be noted. The teacher can create a part if necessary or place him in charge of properties. When praise and recognition are used wisely, such a child often comes to gain needed self-confidence, and he becomes accepted by the group for doing his part well.

During the discussion that follows the informal dramatization, attitudes toward others and about oneself are revealed. Immature and unworthy attitudes are expected. Following a play about Eskimoes one child commented that she hadn't known what Eskimoes were like but now she liked them. Projecting oneself into various roles from many walks of life, from many countries, from the past and the present, helps children to feel and understand the likeness and differences among men. As the class evaluates the performances there is need to teach forebearance. A child has to learn to continue to accept helpful criticism. It is also one way in which he can learn how he appears to others.

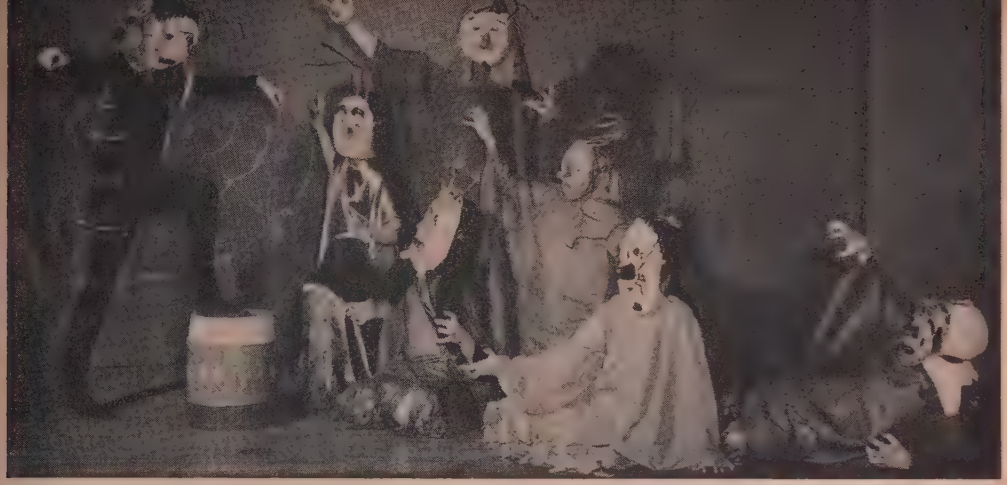
Getting Along in Groups

Group dynamics are real as children plan, play, and discuss a story. Selecting a story and the cast, working harmoniously together for a common goal, discussing and evaluating their efforts—all are demands on their abilities to live together democratically. They must accept gracefully the wishes and will of others, take a minor role if necessary, allow for differences of opinion, and develop a satisfaction in understanding and being willing to help others. The teacher must set the scene by her own attitudes and skills in social relationships.

Out of and interrelated with the development of the whole child emerges a maturing complex pattern of facility in the uses of language to communicate with others. It has been said that creative dramatics tends to integrate all the arts; each of the four aspects of communication are employed in informal dramatics.

Reading an exciting story or a thrilling chapter in a social studies textbook serves as the basis for the play. Dramatization may reveal deficiencies in getting meaning from books. Children soon learn what goes into a play and are motivated to read between the lines, to become sensitive to character development—eventually to read dramatic literature during their leisure. Above all, they learn to speak and to listen.

During the enactment of the play each child must express his ideas as well as he can and speak distinctly so that he may be understood. He must think quickly to follow cues, improvise, and *ad lib*. Immature speech, mispronunciation, monotonous tone, and improper pitch are revealed and should be unnoticed at the time, leaving corrective



Courtesy, St. Luke's School, New York City

measures until later. Occasionally mature insight and appreciation for appropriate diction are an outcome, as in the case of Jane.

Jane was elected to play the part of Queen Isabella for the dramatization of Columbus' plea for aid in making his voyage to America. The textbook stated that when Columbus told Isabella that he believed the world to be round, she had said, "You're a foolish person to expect me to believe that." During the stress of the play, Queen Isabella had answered, "Columbus, you're nuts." No comment was made, but when the discussion period started, Jane was the first to raise her hand. "I made a mistake," she said. "I should have said, 'Columbus, you're a foolish person.' People living then, and especially queens, wouldn't say, 'You're nuts.' "

Learning To Evaluate

The audience during the creative dramatics period needs guidance in judging and evaluating classmates' performances. Children should be encouraged to help establish their own suitable standards of taste, sincerity, and understanding of human motivation and behavior. There is also need for training in listening to the radio, television, and motion pictures. Wire or tape recordings of the best of radio can be made. Film classics, such as *Treasure Island*, and *Great Expectations*, are available for study and discussion. Humor, adventure, and excitement are not lacking in the finest materials presented through these media. Entertainment values need not be lost as children learn to formulate mature standards of taste and appreciation. Then they will reject what is spurious, insincere, and unsatifying. Many of the problems raised by television may be settled when children have mature taste and know where to turn for satisfaction.

Writing activities are incidental in the lower grades to the creative dramatics program. However, the children's dialogue may be recorded after several informal playings of a story if a formal play is to be shared with other pupils and parents.

Maturity in communication is a growth process dependent upon the interrelation of the whole child with his experiences and activities in the use of language. The entire process is quickened and enriched through the spirit of play. Children want to grow up; if we are creative as teachers we will then help them to arrive at their own standards so that communication is sincere, clear, effective, and beautiful.

By FLORENCE BRUMBAUGH

Recordings Bring New Understanding

Listening to records is only the beginning of the recording's potentialities as a source of communication. How this auditory medium may be used to fill a vital and diversified role in the complex task of growing toward maturity is suggested by Florence Brumbaugh, principal, Hunter College Elementary School, New York.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE STORY OF THE kindergarten child in the park who told another not to look at the elephant, "'cause if you do you'll have to draw it when you get back to school"?

For many children a pleasant excursion is spoiled when they are asked to write about it or wait impatiently while the teacher writes on a blackboard or chart. Most children will enjoy speaking spontaneously into a microphone. If the school has a wire, tape, or disc recorder, they and others will take pleasure in hearing the recordings played.

A Tie Between School and Home

Parents like to hear their children's recordings at conferences with the teacher. Through this medium they can better understand the relationship of the individual to the group. They can hear the dominant voices recur repeatedly and note the silence of others. Through comments made by children and teacher, a parent will see what the teacher means when she describes certain traits in her written reports. Often these are the things which are not evidenced at home but which arise in a group situation.

Planning periods are difficult for a teacher to describe, but a recording played at a class meeting of parents, or in a study group, will clarify the meaning of such democratic procedures. Occasionally recordings may be of universal appeal and can be used at the general Parents Association meeting or broadcast over the local radio station. Such programs as Quiz Kids and Juvenile Jury have proved the popularity of children's conversation, but if the topics under discussion have a direct connection with the child's present education, the approval of the parent is added to his amusement.

Assembly programs given by and for the children can be recorded and used at evening meetings when it is not desirable to have the children present. If the boys and girls know that the recording is for an adult audience as well as their schoolmates, the quality of the presentation is frequently improved.

The commentary to amateur motion pictures, made either by the teachers or parents, may be spoken by the children who participated in making the movie. This can be given before or after the film is shown and does not have to be synchronized with the film itself. Such a commentary will add to the interest in the movie.

Original songs, so hard for the teacher to catch or the child to repeat, can be captured on a spool of wire or tape. These can be transcribed or scored at a later time. By erasing the recording, other songs may be added to the "music book."

Small children as well as the older

ones like to tell stories into the microphone and self-criticism usually results. Other members of the class can note the pronunciation, enunciation, repetitions and hesitancy of the speakers. They try to avoid similar errors when it is their turn.

Every school has at least one expert story-teller—parent, teacher, or pupil. This person can record favorite stories, old or new, for the benefit of others who do not have such talent. Substitute teachers find such recordings a blessing when they are asked to assume charge of a strange class. Student teachers find them valuable in learning how to tell stories.

Wise Use and Careful Selection

Although every speech clinic uses some type of recorder, teachers who use them for speech correction may find that emphasis upon mannerisms or other negative criticisms inhibits the child. Enthusiasm for the use of the machine is lost. If a child becomes self-conscious when the microphone is near, he should not be asked to use it when others are present. He should be allowed to listen to his recordings in private. The majority of children think all this is fun after the initial strangeness has been overcome, and they work toward better delivery. However, there will always be a few who have "mike fright" as is true with adults. The microphone must be accepted voluntarily if there is to be any satisfaction.

The school machine should be kept on a rolling stand to facilitate moving from room to room. A compartment below the machine to hold the microphone, albums of spools, and book of directions makes it a portable library. In some schools the recordings circulate in the same manner that books do. A card system used by the librarian will list those loaned to individuals.

The values of the different types of machines must be determined by those who use them. Almost any music store will demonstrate each type. Since the price has dropped below one hundred dollars most schools can afford them. Parents Associations have donated them by raising money in many ingenious ways. One group borrowed a machine and during Open School Week charged participators a quarter to speak into the machine and then hear their recordings played back. The money raised was used to buy the machine and a number of spools of tape.

Another group bought two machines. One was given as a door prize at a general meeting where donations were requested. A third group held a white elephant sale for the sole purpose of getting as many recorders as possible. They were able to raise enough money for three, one for the kindergarten and two for the elementary grades.

Concomitant with the use of any type of recorder at school, other audio aids such as the dictaphone, hearing devices, the more usual means of communication—telephone, telegraph, radio, and now television—should be explained and demonstrated. Much more attention has been focused on the visual aids than on the auditory enrichment of the curriculum.

Since phonograph records have become so popular, an increased interest has been shown in this form of entertainment. However, listening is a passive experience. The making of records affords an opportunity for active participation as well as appreciation through listening. In this way the curriculum can be vitalized and still retain an emphasis upon learning by doing.

By DAVID H. RUSSELL

READING AS COMMUNICATION

The act of reading is not complete until ideas have been received and then passed along to others. Therein lies the close link between reading and communication, a relationship carefully examined here by David H. Russell, professor of education, University of California, Berkeley.

THE LANGUAGE ARTS ARE LARGELY CONcerned with the communication of ideas.

Reading is one of the language arts.

Therefore, reading is largely concerned with the communication of ideas.

Many of us learned in high school or college to question the reasoning of the syllogism, but here is one we can trust. Paramount goals to be gained from reading are meaning, comprehension, and the understanding of ideas and their communication.

Communication is a two-way process. It means receiving ideas from others and giving ideas to them. In reading these two activities are self-evident to any experienced teacher. As the child reads, he gets ideas from the printed page if they are associated with his previous experiences, and he gives ideas to others in reading orally or in telling or writing something of what he has read.

In other words, reading is not just the receiving or absorption of ideas. The silent reading act is complete only when the reading is put to use in some way, and this usually means communicating with others in discussion, reporting, summarizing, interpreting, or recording.

If a teacher or school staff accepts the dictum that reading is largely concerned with the two-way communication of ideas, there are at least three inferences which can be made regarding curricular practice.

Stimulating Ideas

First, if reading is largely concerned with the communication of ideas, the teacher's first task is the stimulation of ideas. In one sense, reading is not so much getting ideas from the printed page as bringing ideas to it. The child can interpret the abstract symbols of a sentence, paragraph, or chapter only as he has experience which enables him to interpret these symbols. In a California city, a fourth-grade boy last year had occasion to visit his principal in the latter's home. His first amazed remark was, "Does your family live here, *all by itself?*" This was the background of a boy who had always lived in housing projects.

In another city a first-grade teacher recently attempted to teach to a group of children from non-English speaking homes of low social-economic status a story about a birthday party in a well-known reader. She found that more than half the children had never had or attended a birthday party with cake, candles, ice cream, and the other usual trappings of such a party for the young in a middle-class American home. These children did not have the ideas to bring to the story in the reader.

We can read only as we have a rich background of experience related to the concepts, pictures, or related forms presented in print. This has long been recognized as a principle of reading readiness. In preparing children to learn to read, the school is concerned largely with the building of experiences such as practice in oral language, picture interpretation, short excursions,

storytelling and listening, following directions, and working in a small group, all of which are necessary background experiences for reading. Understandings, plus some ability to communicate one's understandings, are prerequisite to initial reading success.

The work the teacher and children do together before the children open their books may be the most crucial phase of the reading lesson. In this phase the teacher, assisted by the children, sets the stage. Here the children get some clues to the theme of the story or selection, certain difficult concepts are presented and clarified, and then the children are given some specific purposes for reading the selection silently. Upon the stimulation of ideas will depend the success of the whole directed reading lesson.

In the larger sense, success in any type of reading depends upon the store of ideas and purposes the children have in relation to that reading. In schools where children have chances to observe, manipulate, visit, experiment, and construct they are building up ideas and purposes for reading. This is the school's initial task if the children are to be successful readers.

Getting Your Ideas Across

Second, if reading is largely concerned with the communication of ideas, the mechanics of reading are important only as they contribute to clear communication. In the struggle to provide for the needs of twenty-five or more very different individuals, no teacher can be blamed for losing sight of the larger goals of reading. The cares of the day, such as giving needed help to young Bill with his new words, Mabel, with her monotonous tone, or Gary with his structural analysis, unfortunately don't always "fold their tents like the Arabs, and as silently steal away." Day after day the Bills, Mabels, and Garys need help on these or other mechanics of reading. It is certain, then, that no teacher can be blamed for getting bogged down in the teaching of the mechanics of reading.

It is equally true, however, that word recognition and other skills need to be subordinated to understanding ideas. Research indicates that an emphasis upon meaning or ideas in teaching is more profitable than a continued emphasis upon mechanics. Where children have a chance to reach for important or exciting ideas, their larger reading abilities, including the mechanical skills, improve most rapidly.

One of the chief disadvantages of the older type of phonetic training, such as that in vogue around 1915, was that it continually confronted children with such gems of thought as, "The fat cat sat on the mat." After meeting such ideas for weeks, who would want to learn to read? The modern contrast is the young child who eagerly turns the page for more interesting, even exciting, ideas.

It seems clear, then, that in the teaching of reading the skills should remain subordinate to the meaning. The child should be asked to develop word recognition skills such as using the sounds of initial consonants, noting the effects of the silent *e*, or syllabizing, only that he may grasp ideas readily and coherently. If he has to stop and laboriously work out a word for himself, usually he will have lost the meaning of the sentence or paragraph. That is why, in the developmental reading lesson, the teacher quickly tells the child a word he fails to recognize. After the meaning of the selection has been determined and discussed, it may be necessary to go back

to work on the difficult word or words, but such work must never interfere with grasp of meaning or enjoyment of a story.

All children develop mechanical skills in reading, but we must beware of thinking that these are important in their own right. They are simply keys to unlock doors leading to comprehension of a rich variety of ideas.

Social Setting for Reading

Third, if reading is largely concerned with the communication of ideas, many reading activities must emphasize communication in a social setting. Skillful teachers emphasize the communication aspects of reading by providing situations in which important ideas are transmitted.

The day when we used to think of reading as entirely an individual skill, to be practiced alone as much as possible, has largely gone. It is true that children who have books accessible will always use reading for personal enjoyment and recreation, but it is equally true that some of the enjoyment in books comes from sharing their ideas with others. Accordingly, from the first grade onward, the teacher plans situations in which reading operates as an exchange of ideas.

This emphasis upon the communication of ideas means that the teacher will use "oral reading around the circle" sparingly if at all. Even in the first grade the children are asked to turn over their books to listen while June reads about what the Red Hen did next or what Tom said. In the first months of school the teacher often says, "Listen while Catherine reads the chart story so you can tell . . ."

The social setting for reading is important at all school levels. If children are to be encouraged to listen, of course they must usually be asked to listen to ideas that are new or fresh to them. Hence it is important to introduce "audience reading" of new books, fresh stories, or individual selections brought from home by one child for the rest of the group to enjoy. The ideas read should often be valuable for carrying on related activities. The functional reading of directions for work, announcements, problems, and plans for next steps are examples which emphasize the communication aspects of reading. Any busy classroom presents varied opportunities for true audience reading.

The communication aspect of reading suggests, finally, that the reading program, whether in a first or a seventh grade, cannot be confined to developmental reading activities under the direct guidance of the teacher. Reading includes reading out of the readers, but it is also an activity which runs all through the school day. The blackboard may help the teacher give a good start to the day's activities; the bulletin board can communicate current news of interest; the planning session involves recording and re-reading; the social studies activities, involve charts, maps, and textbooks to be used. School lunch menus are to be read; directions for a scientific experiment must be mastered.

All these activities suggest that reading takes place in a social setting—sometimes with a partner, sometimes in a small group, sometimes to a whole room.

The interested teacher, principal, or supervisor will soon discover, in addition to the three main inferences stated above, other implications of the fact that reading is largely concerned with the communication of ideas. The first-grade teacher who emphasizes compre-

hension of ideas from the beginning, the fourth-grade group who evaluates as mature the reader who gives and receives ideas readily, the sixth-grade child or teacher who believes that the reading act is complete only when the reading is put to work—all these illustrate the current concern for clear and free communication of ideas.

By discussing and adding to the three main inferences discussed above, any school staff will find many specific guides to practice based upon their developing concept of reading as communication.

People Are Part of Reading

The preceding paragraphs have emphasized communication as a process but, in conclusion, it must be pointed out that it is always a process involving persons. It is the child or adult who gives and receives ideas through reading, and the effects on him are crucial. One of the universal needs of children is the ability to communicate.

The ways reading and language situations develop in the classroom affect the child's attitude toward communication as well as his skill in it. For example, one teacher starting the new year with a fourth grade found that the children had done little or no oral reading to an audience. For the first weeks, the teacher and children studied, not the techniques of how to read orally, but the ways of being good listeners. With the emphasis upon the audience, self-consciousness in front of the group was reduced and the attitude toward reading as communication in a social group was thoroughly established.

Today teachers are beginning to emphasize the effects of reading on children. Some personal values of reading and literature develop in individual situations but others depend upon the individual as a person in a functioning group. A boy's reading is something like his ambition to own a bicycle. At first he wants it for its own sake, for the personal pleasure and for the feeling of having acquired something new. But later he uses his bicycle to visit his friends, to become better acquainted with his community, to do errands such as carrying messages in a larger circle of acquaintance. So with reading. Emphasis upon the communication aspects is important for its own sake, but even more it will contribute to the wider socialization of the child.

IT IS EASY IN THE WORLD TO LIVE AFTER THE WORLD'S OPINION: it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.—EMERSON.

By ALTHEA BEERY

Experience---the Source of Communication

Althea Beery, supervisor of primary grades in Cincinnati, helps us to understand how experience is the mainspring of all communication. Illustrations drawn from actual school situations show how a class excursion, a school project, or a shared home activity inspire lively experiences in communication.

EXPERIENCE IS THE SOIL OUT OF WHICH the language of the young child grows. New objects cry out to be named. "What are you doing?" inquires the interested child observer and then, as he imitates the life he sees around him and verbalizes his actions, he comments happily, "I'm raking leaves, too," or "baking a cake," or "dusting the chairs," or "knitting a sweater." We are amused and sometimes chagrined when we come upon young children in dramatic play carrying on conversations which include adult expressions even to tone of voice and mannerisms.

Experience Comes First

The kindergarten children have visited a fruit and vegetable market. On their return they plan to make a market of their own. They want their prunes in a *cellophane* bag because it is more *sanitary*. They visit their play market by families. One "mother" exclaims, "Daddy, watch these kids. I want to sit down and rest a minute." [1]

Language is an integral part of most of the child's pre-school experience. He observes, listens, questions, participates, comments, and talks things over as a matter of course. He uses speech naturally as he needs to give or get information or feels moved to verbalize the experience as he understands it. And with this free give-and-take between doing, listening, and commenting comes amazing growth in language power.

The pre-school child who has an adult to answer his questions and to engage him in conversation grows more rapidly in ability to use language than the child who is neglected or who gets all his language patterns from his playmates. In the same way experiences of the school-aged child contribute more to language growth when an adult is present to direct his observation, explain processes, and guide conversation. Aside from depriving the child of worthwhile experiences, the greatest threat to continued language development during school years is that often the classroom situation offers him too little opportunity to talk. Being one of a group of thirty or thirty-five puts some limitation at best on opportunity for language expression.

Sharing Periods Are Important

Children bring into a friendly classroom the things that happen to them outside of school. Glenn, usually shy and retiring, breathlessly announces the arrival of a baby brother and that he has chosen the baby's name. The others share his excitement and relate their own

[1] The writer acknowledges her indebtedness to the Cincinnati teachers from whose primary classrooms the examples in this article came and to the many other teachers from whose rooms similar illustrations could have been selected.

experiences with baby brothers and sisters. The conversation turns to how they may help mother care for the baby.

Sharing time is a regular part of the program in many primary classrooms today. The young child keeps close to the personal—his new shoes, a new sweater, a pulled tooth, a trip he has taken, a new toy, what he has seen on television. Usually this time becomes a "show and tell" occasion, for children often talk more freely with a picture or an object in their hands. By the end of the primary period events less personally related to themselves are reported, and standards as to the responsibilities of both speakers and listeners have evolved.

Television is here, and daily in many homes in many communities children are spending much of their free time absorbing experience at secondhand. One kindergarten teacher notices that her children are more widely informed than before. One third-grade teacher finds that almost every child has a television set and that all but three of these children have family regulations on the length of time and the type of program they are allowed to view. Certain it is that teachers may expect television shows to be discussed in sharing periods.

When schools did not reopen on the Monday after Thanksgiving, one kindergarten teacher who has no television set of her own arranged to spend the day in a home which had a set so she could follow the Santa Claus shows her children were seeing and be ready to help them capitalize on them. One of her aims for the holiday season was to develop the concept that each child is Santa as he gives presents to others. When the children discussed the Santa programs, she was ready to clarify concepts for them. Out of the discussion grew informal dramatizations.

So great is the interest in television shows that a theatre appeared in the back of a primary room. Paper bag puppets were made and, as groups completed their preparations, a sign, "Today's Attractions," was displayed on the theatre, and a "Three Bears" or "Red Riding Hood" play was presented to the class. The problem became one of how to find time in a busy schedule for the children to share what they had prepared for an audience. A child ejaculated "Jeepers! What big ears you have!" "Yipe! What big teeth you have!" Standards were gradually raised, but classmates provided an interested audience without the pressure of a finished performance.

The teacher often finds that provision for small groups helps to give every child a chance to make his contribution in sharing time. The children who wish to discuss a television show, a movie, or a game they have seen meet in groups to talk over the experience.

Common Experiences Foster Communication

A shared experience of a group has the advantage over individual experiences in that it offers a common basis for conversation and discussion. A class trip to the zoo, a school-wide paper sale, or Book Week celebration encourages language expression, increases the chances for real communication, and decreases the likelihood of misunderstanding.

Common experiences need not be elaborate to be significant. A primary teacher told me recently, "The gift of a huge pumpkin at Halloween from a boy I know who lives on a farm in a neighboring state gave rise to more language opportunities than the class

trip to the farm. The children were impressed by the size of the pumpkin; they combined planning and doing as they made it into a jack-o-lantern. Their "thank-you" note to the boy was carefully prepared and the answer proudly displayed. Finally, they had the joy of giving pleasure themselves as they decided to send their pumpkin home with another teacher for her own little girl."

The second-graders were beginning to exhaust the crayons and other supplies they had brought at the beginning of the school year. When Charles announced that his father had a school supply store nearby, the class made a trip to see for themselves. They related their experiences in a story of their own.

Weeks later when the class was filling Red Cross boxes, they organized their ideas of appropriate store behavior in the following chart.

How Can We Be Good Customers?

Be safe
Look where you are going.
Keep away from glass.
Stand quietly.
Keep your hands to yourself.

Be polite
Wait for your turn.
Talk with a soft voice.
Say, "Please," "Thank you," and "You are welcome."
Touch only what you are going to buy.

Be honest
Pay for what you get.
Give the right money.
Give back money if you get too much change.

Discussion centered around what children in another country might like. They listed *Things for School, Things for Play, Things for Good Health, Things to Wear,* separately for boys and girls, and followed it with a trip to the ten-cent store to purchase the items they had agreed on.

In primary classrooms today children are happily busy, planning their own experiences under the guidance of a teacher who seizes the opportunities these offer for "talking and writing that make a difference."

The second-graders, in a combination first- and second-grade group, met under Alan's leadership to make plans for a frieze for the classroom. Alan gave each volunteer a chance to express his idea, although it was evident that Alan favored portraying fun in the snow rather than Santa's workshop. After ten minutes the teacher who had been working with the first-graders joined the group and Alan reported their plans. When Ruth reiterated her idea about Santa's workshop, the teacher stated that it should receive consideration. The children voted and the snow scene won. After a few minutes of discussion about what might be included and where the finished frieze might be displayed, the children scattered, each to put his ideas for the frieze on paper so that the group might use them later in agreeing upon a final arrangement.

Vital Classroom Living Keeps Communication Lines Open

On the chalkboard in a first-grade classroom the teacher printed a large sign.

Summer Round-Up
Tuesday, May 18

The children enacted the procedures used in giving physical examinations to children about to enter school for the first time. Tony, the doctor, examined a child with his "Thessascope." He tapped the child upon the chest and back and engaged in a whispered conversation. Susan, the nurse, pretended to write a report and then led the child away as the next one approached.

In this particular school the children themselves carry considerable responsi-

bility for seeing that younger brothers and sisters and five-year-olds in the neighborhood come to Summer Round-Up. It goes without saying that reliving their own experience in this fashion will make them more effective emissaries. Even young children can interpret the school to the home when the experience is close to them.

In another primary classroom in October the children composed a letter to tell their parents that the school would be closed on Friday because of a teachers' meeting. It was the first holiday of the year and the teacher wanted them to have the experience of spending a part of the holiday in helping at home. The teacher asked if she might add a sentence at the bottom of their letter. This is the sentence: "I will help you—."

Since several of them wanted suggestions of what they might do, the children who had definite ideas of ways they could help dramatized them for the others and let the class guess how they were going to help. After several of the class had dramatized their ideas, one little boy was heard to say, "I'll sure be busy."

The weather was a topic of absorbing interest in all primary classrooms after the unusual snowfall which had closed school for a day. Morning news bulleties were based on it.

Paul, a second-grader, had written his own story about "The Very Big Snow." A classmate went over it with him. When the teacher checked it before he made his final copy, the only corrections needed were the insertion of the second *p* in *stopped* and the substitution of *e* for *a* in *went*. Here is his story.

The Very Big Snow

Once there was a very big snow. It got bigger and bigger and soon it stopped. I went outside. I made a snowman. It was fun. That's all.

—*By* Paul

Carol, a third-grader, had brought to school a jar about one-third full of water and sediment. She explained to the class how she had packed it full of white snow the night before. The explanation was natural and straightforward, for Carol had planned the activity herself. Class discussion of weather followed, and the children listed questions on weather which they wished to be able to answer more intelligently.

The children searched through science books on the library table, slipped in markers for appropriate pages, and planned ways other than reading to find answers to their questions.

Experience and Communication Are Twins

Experience is basic to communication. Just as truly, however, oral and written communication enriches, clarifies, and interprets experience. Fortunate are the children whose teacher prepares them through discussion and raising of questions to meet new experiences with a questing attitude, is alert to new concepts and terms which the experience provides, and encourages them to make the experiences their own through discussion, dramatic play, or some art expression.

Teachers encourage but do not force expression as an aftermath of a class experience for they know that a vivid experience is ever after a part of the child's background, a part of the richness on which a child draws in future communication and in understanding others. It may well be that an apt expression or a fresh bit of writing may owe something of its vitality to an earlier experience.

1951 ACEI Study Conference

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

MARCH 26-30

Branch Forums—Tuesday, March 27, 1:30 to 4:00

Members will work in six groups. Each group will study one of the resolutions adopted as the basis for ACEI's 1951-1953 *Plan of Action for Children.* "Action steps" that will implement the resolution will be developed for the guidance of individual members, branches and state associations.

Branch Forums—Wednesday, March 28, 1:30 to 4:00

Members will work in groups representing branches of varying types and sizes.

ACE State Association Forum—Thursday, March 29, 1:00 to 3:00

The responsibilities of state associations will be studied and discussed.

* * *

The effectiveness of the Association for Childhood Education International depends upon the way local and state ACE groups function. Do the programs and other activities contribute to the development of members and to the improvement of opportunities for children? The branch forums at the Seattle Conference will strengthen the Association's work at all levels.

Official Childhood Education Train Trip

On March 23, the official convention-bound train will leave Union Station in Chicago for Seattle, and if you're going to the convention, we'd like to have you join with us. On the way, it will be pleasant traveling, in congenial company, through our Northwest tier of states: Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho and Washington.

We'll be riding on "The Great Big Baked Potato" railroad, where famously good food is an important tradition. If you enjoy dramatic scenery, then this trip will appeal to you, as 28 snow-capped ranges of mountains will parade past train windows on the Northern Pacific, our official railroad.

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL
1200 15th St., N. W. Washington 5, D. C.

News and REVIEWS . . .

News HERE and THERE . . .

By MARY E. LEEPER

New ACE Branches

Athens Area Association for Childhood Education, Georgia
Polk County Association for Childhood Education, Oregon
Cumberland County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee
Smith County Association for Childhood Education, Tennessee
Wiley College Association for Childhood Education, Marshall, Texas
Troup Association for Childhood Education, Texas

New State Associations

South Carolina Association for Childhood Education

ACEI Develops 1951-1953 Plan of Action

Every two years members of the Association for Childhood Education International develop a plan of action as a working guide for individual members, for branches, and for the International Association. The steps in its development are these:

First: Branches, international, and life members report by means of a questionnaire on the needs of children as seen in the communities where the members live.

Second: These reports in summary form are studied and discussed by ACEI Executive Board members, major areas of need determined, and resolutions on each stated.

Third: Suggested resolutions are submitted to branches, international, and life members for study and suggestions on ways of implementing the resolutions.

Fourth: At ACEI's annual meeting delegates vote to accept or not accept the resolutions and through discussion develop ways of working that will implement the accepted resolutions.

Fifth: Resolutions and the suggestions for action are presented at the final general session and then become the official Plan of Action for the Association for the following two years.

In the development of the 1951-1953 Plan of Action the "third step" has now been reached. Six resolutions have been submitted to members in the January *Branch Exchange.* These resolutions will be acted on in Seattle in March. ACE branch presidents are urged to provide opportunities for members to discuss the resolutions and suggest ways of implementing them.

Copies of the suggested resolutions may be secured from ACEI headquarters, 1200 Fifteenth Street, N. W., Washington 5, D. C.

Childhood Education at AASA

When the American Association of School Administrators holds its meeting in Atlantic City, February 17-22, the education of young children will be given attention.

The Editorial Board of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION will hold a breakfast meeting on Tuesday, February 20, at the Madison Hotel.

On Wednesday, February 21, at the Madison Hotel, the National Association for Nursery Education and the Association for Childhood Education International will jointly sponsor a luncheon conference. These plans will be followed:

Presiding: Jennie Campbell, president, Association for Childhood Education International
Topic: Education of Teachers for Young Children
Presentation of the Subject: Willard B. Spaulding, dean, College of Education, University of Illinois
Discussion: Frances Horwich, Roosevelt College, president, National Association for Nursery Education

This luncheon will afford an opportunity for members of the two groups sponsoring the luncheon and for others who are interested in this special field to come together for both fellowship and work. Tickets will be on sale in the auditorium office of AASA.

The Association for Childhood Education International will maintain a booth in the exhibit hall and staff members will be available for conferences there. The booth number is E-27. The director of the booth will be Mrs. Alida Hisle.

Winifred Bain Participates in Revisitation Program

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is embarking upon a program of revisitation of all member institutions during the coming three-year period. To carry out this program it will be necessary to have a supply of specially trained visitors. They must be able to apply the new standards and schedules of the American Association for Teacher Education in a manner

which will provide comparable data from the various institutions visited.

Winifred E. Bain, president of Wheelock College and chairman of ACEI's Advisory Committee, has been chosen to serve as a member of one of the revisitation teams during the next three years. She participated in the training program for team members held at Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Iowa, in January.

Midcentury White House Conference

The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth meeting in Washington, D. C., December 3-7, marked a high point in the efforts of the people of the United States to provide improved opportunities for children. For four days over five thousand people conferred on:

How the necessary mental, emotional and spiritual qualities may be developed in children

How the physical, economic and social conditions favorable to such development may be assured

The true value of the conference cannot be measured now. What was accomplished by the conference will appear as the citizens in states and local communities go into realistic action to keep the pledge to children accepted by the delegates (see January CHILDHOOD EDUCATION). In meeting the terms of the pledge many of the sixty-eight recommendations passed at the final plenary session will be followed. These recommendations merit review by every citizen and particularly by those concerned for children. Single copies of the conference platform containing the pledge, the recommendations, and the final consensus of the conference may be secured by writing to the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, FSA Building, Washington 25, D. C.

Brotherhood Week

February 18-25 has been named as Brotherhood Week for 1951. Milton S. Eisenhower, president of Pennsylvania State College, and Philip J. Hickey, superintendent of St. Louis public schools, are serving as national chairman and vice-chairman respectively of the Schools and Colleges Committee. Irwin Edman in speaking of this special week says:

It is sad that there should be such grim reasons for having to remind people once a year of the brotherhood of man. The news is not that the brotherhood of man exists, but that another year has gone by and it still does not. That is why Brotherhood Week is a matter for the American people to take seriously. One can only hope that some day, relatively soon, the *fact* of brotherhood will be so familiar that no person in his right senses would feel it necessary to mention it.

The celebration of this week is sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Materials suggesting proper observance of the week may be secured from that organization at 381 Fourth Avenue, New York 16.

ASCD Meets in Detroit

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development will hold its sixth annual conference in Detroit, February 10-15, 1951. The timely theme is: *Curriculum Improvement in the World Crisis.* Special features of this meeting include: forty study groups; general sessions; 1951 Yearbook presentation; visits to Detroit schools and industrial plants; instructional exhibits; alumni dinners; ASCD committee meetings.

Registration for ASCD members is $2; for nonmembers, $5. For further information write to: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Class Size in Oregon

A few years ago in Oregon no one became concerned about class size until it passed the forty mark. Today there is genuine concern if it goes beyond thirty pupils per teacher. Recent reports show that in visits to one hundred first-grade rooms, in only twenty-six did the enrollment exceed thirty and in only one case did it reach forty.

The Oregon ACE in 1946 with the Oregon State Teachers Association sponsored the following resolution:

We wish to go on record as sponsoring the reduction of the class load for all schools to a maximum of twenty-five pupils per teacher in order to more adequately meet the mental, physical and emotional needs of the children of Oregon.

Today the maximum enrollment recommended in the state-wide standardization is twenty-five in the kindergarten and first three grades and thirty in other grades. Emergency situations are sometimes difficult to control but in Oregon the class loads have been materially reduced in the three years since that standard has been in effect. Credit is due to the school boards, administrators and patrons who are planning so well in the interest of children.

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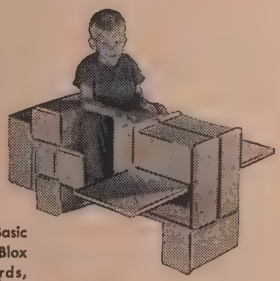

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Books for CHILDREN . . .

Editor, LELAND B. JACOBS

In this modern day various mass media of communication—radio, movies, comic books, and television in particular—vie for children's time which once was devoted more exclusively to reading. One of the implications of this fact is this: Editors, parents, librarians, and teachers must make available such appealing books that reading will command children's attention. In tempo, in spirit, in ideas, and in interest these books must captivate the virile imaginations of modern children. They must, by virtue of their superior merits, cause boys and girls to make time for reading. Here are some books which can ably attract children to reserve time for reading.

FIRST ADVENTURE. *By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illustrated by Ralph Ray. New York: Macmillan Co., 1950. Pp. 60. $1.50.* Some years ago Elizabeth Coatsworth wrote for children *Dancing Tom*, the amusing story of a lively pig which, at the same time, gave the child reader a sense of history. In *First Adventure* this writer again turns out a book which is, first of all, a moving, well-told story. At the same time, Miss Coatsworth has so developed her plot that the reader cannot miss the essence of times past. How Johnny Billington, a child in Pilgrim days, followed Master Goodwin's dog off into the forbidden forest, got lost, and wandered into an Indian camp makes fine stuff from a plot-interest point of view. More than this, however, Miss Coatsworth creates the atmosphere of times past so skillfully that the young reader enjoys the flavor of history without being burdened by historic fact. Seven- to nine-year-olds (and slow readers beyond these ages) will find *First Adventure* a well-turned, fast-moving tale, replete with a red-blooded boy, a dog, appalling dark nights in the deep forest, and Indians.

JOHN HENRY AND HIS HAMMER. *By Harold W. Felton. Illustrated by Aldren A. Watson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 501 Madison Ave., 1950. Pp. 85. $2.50.* Among the great heroes of our country's folklore John Henry takes a prominent place;

and a well-deserved place it is, for he is a "grass-roots" American workman, indomitable in spirit and adept in turning his manual skills to practical and satisfying ends.

John Henry early outgrew the confines of his provincial home and confidently went out to make his own way in this vast land. He had faith in his ability to work—to get ahead by the sweat of his brow and the power of his arms and hands. He could work successfully with a hoe, or behind a plow, or on a riverboat. But always he seemed to sense that somewhere, sometime he must fulfill his destiny with a hammer in his hand. When John Henry became Casey Jones' fireman on Old Number 99, his destiny almost eluded him. However, this giant figure finally found his place. He hammered so that the railroads of America were extended. He hammered out tunnels so that trains might pass through. He died with his hammer as the symbol of his ideals and his strength.

Harold Felton gives John Henry integrity and stature in this book. Felton's writing carries, in bold strokes, a heart-warming picture of this amiable, determined hero. It breathes the vigor and power of a mighty pioneer. It moves surely and robustly along as if on singing wheels. Here is a superman worthy of the admiration of children in the later-elementary grades.

BLAZE FINDS THE TRAIL. *By C. W. Anderson. Illustrated by the author. New York: Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Ave., 1950. Pp. 44. $1.50.* Blaze is one of the great horses of literature and Billy is a fine master for such a horse. Young horse lovers probably already know *Billy and Blaze, Blaze and the Gypsies,* and *Blaze and the Forest Fire.* Here is a new adventure for horse and master, one that sees Billy and Blaze start out on an old woodland road that is quite unfamiliar to them. At first the old road is fun to explore, but when Billy realizes that they are lost, the old road becomes ominous and threatening. Blaze comes to the rescue, however, and finally is able to bring his master back to home territory.

Anderson's plots are always plausible and life-like, uncluttered by artificial motivations. Billy is a natural, normal lad who has wonderful times with his horse. Blaze is a lively, appealing pony, the kind any youngster would

(*Continued on page* 288)

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Books for CHILDREN

(*Continued from page* 287)

be proud to own. As in the previous books about this inseparable pair, Blaze comes pictorially alive. In twenty-two beautiful full-page illustrations one sees Blaze in many different moods. In all of children's literature few artists equal and none excel C. W. Anderson in drawing horses.

ELMER AND THE DRAGON. *By Ruth Stiles Gannett. Illustrated by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. New York: Random House, 457 Madison Ave., 1950. Pp. 87. $2.* One finished the last page of *My Father's Dragon* satisfied that Elmer Elevator had been able to rescue the flying little dragon from the ferocious animals of Wild Island. At the same time, the reader could not help but wonder what happened to Elmer and the dragon after the escape. Now the author has answered that question by relating what befell this strange pair as they wended their way toward Elmer's home. They were forced down in the middle of the ocean by a heavy storm. They got well acquainted with Flute and King Can XI on an island inhabited exclusively by escaped canaries. They found a wonderful treasure chest. They delivered Elmer safely at home.

Inventiveness in a fanciful story can be terribly trite. Ruth Stiles Gannett has twice escaped this pitfall. Yet, as with most

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- Hoppy, the Rabbit
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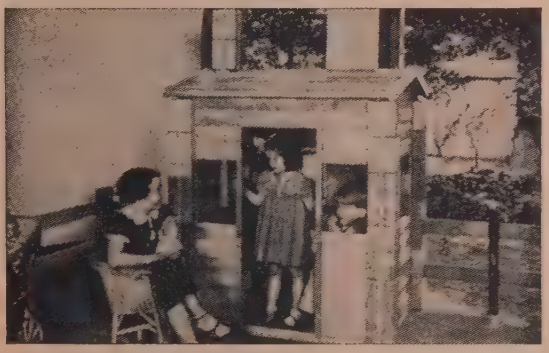
sequels, *Elmer and the Dragon* lacks some of the freshness and charm of its highly original predecessor. In spite of this, the story-telling is again intimate and entertaining. And Ruth Chrisman Gannett's pictures—especially her little dragon—are delightfully satisfying for children in the middle grades. Elmer Elevator is mighty interesting company.

WHY COWBOYS SING, IN TEXAS. *By LeGrand Henderson. Illustrated by the author. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 150 Fifth Ave., 1950. Pp. 38. $2.* LeGrand won the hearts of American children with his *Augustus* books. He continued to hold his audience with two American tales from folklore, *Cap'n Dow and the Hole in the Doughnut* and *Cats for Kansas.* Again, now, from the rich field of folklore LeGrand has written another book that has ingredients which will surely capture middle-grade children's attention.

The plot, simple in designing, is one that persistently proves mirth-provoking to children. Cowboys in Texas once were silent. But Slim Jim Bean changed all that when he happened to sing a song that sent the cattle stampeding all over the Lone Star state. This made Slim Jim a most unpopular cowboy. Then he learned, quite by accident, another song that called all the cattle back—a song that the cowboys in Texas still use.

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT. *Retold by Marcia Brown. Illustrated by the writer. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Ave., 1950. Pp. 30. $1.75.* One of the great "success stories" of all times has again been made available to children by Marcia Brown. Both in storytelling and picture, the well-loved story of the Bow Bells' prediction of Whittington's future is handsomely done. The storytelling retains the folktale qualities of directness, fast action, and perceptive sensory appeal. To these qualities Marcia Brown adds a wholesome sturdiness of style that gives strength and integrity to this old tale of the success of Dick Whittington's ventures. Even more distinctive are the pictures done as linoleum cuts. In a difficult medium Marcia Brown has achieved such vitality of movement and appropriateness of feeling that this retelling of the familiar is entirely unhackneyed. Instead, this book is a very satisfying new experience.



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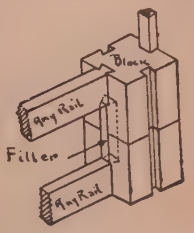

Books for Teachers . . .

Editor, RUTH G. STRICKLAND

SOCIAL STUDIES FOR CHILDREN IN A DEMOCRACY. *By John U. Michaelis. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., 1950. Pp. 466. $4.25.* For those teachers who have been seeking help in rethinking their social studies programs with a view to gearing them more closely to modern living, this book may come as a boon.

The author sees social studies in the elementary school within the framework of our democratic tradition as a unified social living experience—not as an isolated curriculum area. He believes that the social studies must come to occupy a vital place in the education of young children, assuming as their major purpose the task of helping boys and girls live effectively in our modern society. His analysis of the contributions of social studies to the development of democratic principles is at once simple and forceful.

In all his discussion of democracy and its needs, the author places first emphasis upon children. He sees clearly their developmental traits and emphasizes the importance of capitalizing upon their needs and abilities to promote improved learning. He is able to clearly define the function of the social studies in assisting children to well-adjusted personalities and happy participation in democratic living.

Having established the framework within which the social studies operate, the author describes what he believes the new program to be. He gives a sensible, challenging, picture of modern elementary education that goes seriously about the business of establishing attitudes, habits, and skills that are right for democracy. Here is modern education with depth and purpose.

Specifically, the book shows the way to a more vital and interesting social studies program. How to plan experiences with children, how to develop and encourage the use of group processes, how to utilize a myriad of materials, how to make reading meaningful, how to construct, to dramatize, and to dance are practical information.

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This is surely a book for those who wish to embark upon a social studies curriculum that emphasizes democratic values, child growth and development, and the improvement of learning. Its easy readability will be appreciated by those who are about to teach and welcomed by seasoned educators who have grown weary of tedious methods books. —*Reviewed by* MAXINE DUNFEE, *assistant professor, Indiana University, Bloomington.*

SUPERVISION FOR BETTER SCHOOLS. *By Kimball Wiles. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950. Pp. 330. $3.75.* Reader interest in this volume is caught immediately by an intriguing set of illustrations, descriptions of four types of supervisors; Bill who directs, Ann who manipulates, Tom who operates by laissez-faire, and Jim who leads by working within the group to release the full potential abilities of all members.

The writer distinguishes between officially appointed leadership and leadership that emerges from within the group. He points out that the supervisor's leadership is practically always of the first type but again he draws a contrast. He points out that there is the leader who *works on* the group or dominates; the leader who *works for* the group—which is a denial of leadership; and the productive leader who *work within* the group.

Some familiar problems appear in the new type of setting which this book provides. In general, the treatment of problems is consistent with the approach toward supervision which the author has adopted. If there seems to be too much reliance on generalizations at points, there is concrete illustration at other points, and suggestions that are specific.

The bibliography is extensive but the text has no footnotes. Some related studies in industrial research are reviewed in the appendix. One excellent report of a school's change to democratic administration and its growth, thereby, is also included in the appendix.—*Reviewed by* ELIZABETH GUILFOILE, *Cincinnati Public Schools, Ohio.*

CREATIVE PLAY ACTING. *By Isabel B. Burger. New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 101 Fifth Ave., 1950. Pp. 195. $3.* In these days when children spend far more hours

(*Continued on page* 292)

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Books for TEACHERS

(*Continued from page* 291)

than are good for them in just sitting and looking and listening, it is good to find that at least a few people are striving to find interests in which children will be active doers rather than passive absorbers. The Children's Theater movement is gaining momentum in the United States and promises to add some richness to children's experience.

All young children enter into dramatic play. Dramatization has a place in almost every school, recreation center and summer camp, and is being utilized by many Sunday Schools as well. Older children find great pleasure in putting on productions which are more polished and which require more time than those which satisfy the younger groups.

Isabel Burger, Director of the Children's Experimental Theater in Baltimore, Maryland, sets forth in this book concrete suggestions for helping children with creative play acting. She portrays the progress step by step from simple pantomime to a complete play. She is concerned mainly with the creative possibilities of children from eight years of age up through the teens.

Older boys and girls become interested in stage setting, costumes, lighting and the like while younger children are able to let their imaginations take care of all such matters. Older children as well as younger children do far better with dramatics when they work through with their own ideas instead of merely memorizing a play.

The educative values to be found in a creative approach to dramatics for older children and young people should be quite clear. The thinking, planning, experimenting, producing, and evaluating which go into it have obvious values. Timid children blossom forth and conforming children learn that their own ideas also have worth.

With the present-day substitution of television, radio, and the movies for the back door-yard circuses and the home plays which many teachers knew in their childhood, anything which tends to make boys and girls active as thinkers and workers is important. This book should prove both practical and inspirational for school and community workers.—R.G.S.

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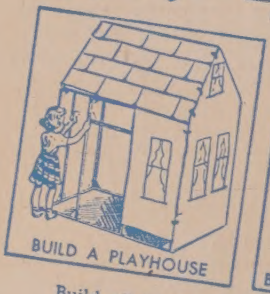

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